

means for ~~apportioning~~ pre-apportioning as ideals the quantified available resource capacity for the activity to the different technology areas of interest in the computer tracking system based on a ~~priority~~ value assigned to each technology area of interest;

means for ~~obtaining~~ periodically inputting actual resource usage by technology area ~~from~~ into the computer tracking system; and

means for employing the computer tracking system in ~~providing~~ periodically generating a report indicative of the difference between the inputted actual resource usage and the pre-apportioned resource ~~allocation~~ capacity ideals by technology areas of interest for use in managing resource allocation adjustments for the intellectual property activity.

32. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said means for employing (v) comprises means for proactively managing future resource allocation for the intellectual property activity by determining the difference between the inputted actual resource usage and the pre-apportioned resource capacity allocation by technology area of interest.

33. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 32, further comprising for a given time period, means for periodically repeating the means for ~~obtaining~~ inputting and the means for employing to achieve within the given time period set goals for the intellectual property activity based on assigned technology tags.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the means for assigning technology tags comprises means for assigning technology based descriptors to different technology fields of the intellectual property activity.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the means for employing comprises means for dynamically adjusting, within the given time period, resource allocation to at least one technology field of the intellectual property activity.

36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the means for employing comprises means for periodically assembling the report including the actual resource usage by technology areas of interest and set goals for the intellectual property activity based on assigned technology tags.

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the periodically assembled report further includes the actual resource usage by technology tag for a first time period and the actual resource usage by technology tag for a second time period, wherein the second time period is longer than the first time period.

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the means for employing comprises means for comparing the actual resource usage by technology tag for the first time period and the actual resource usage by technology tag for the second time period, and based thereon, means for proactively adjusting resource allocation by technology areas of interest for the intellectual property activity to achieve the set goals.

39. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the intellectual property activity comprises at least one of (1) modulating invention disclosure creation activity, (2) evaluating invention disclosures, (3) searching inventions based on evaluated invention disclosures, (4) filing patent applications based on evaluated invention disclosures, (5) issuing patents, and (6) maintaining issued patents.

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31, further comprising means for setting intellectual property activity goals, the setting including at least some of: (1) understanding current and future opportunity space for a business; (2) understanding the current intellectual property portfolio; (3) identifying technology fields requiring intellectual property development; (4) setting intellectual property development objectives; and (5) identifying and communicating specific technology opportunities; and wherein the means for employing comprises proactively managing the resource allocation by technology areas of interest to achieve the intellectual property activity goals.

41. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the intellectual property activity comprises invention development, and wherein the means for employing comprises means for proactively managing resource allocation to achieve invention development goals using the actual resource usage and the prior resource allocation by technology areas of interest.

42. (Canceled).

43. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for managing invention disclosures, comprising:

means for ~~determining~~ quantifying a desired number of invention disclosures based on available resources;

means for ~~apportioning~~ pre-apportioning in a computer tracking system the desired number of invention disclosures by a plurality of technology tags, representing different technology areas of interest, based on a ~~priority~~ value assigned to each of the technology areas of interest;

means for ~~tracking via a computer tracking system~~ inputting an actual number of generated invention disclosures by technology area of interest into the computer tracking system, and means for employing the computer tracking system in ~~providing~~ periodically generating a report indicative of the difference between the actual number of invention disclosures by technology area of interest and the pre-apportioned desired number of invention disclosures by technology area of interest; and

means for using the periodically generated report to proactively manage at least one of invention disclosure creation, and invention disclosure evaluation for patent searching or patent application filing.

44. (Currently Amended) At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of managing resource allocations within an intellectual property portfolio, said method comprising:

- (i) ~~determining~~ quantifying available resource capacity for an intellectual property activity managed via a computer tracking system;
- (ii) assigning technology tags to the activity in the computer tracking system, the technology tags representing different technology areas of interest;
- (iii) ~~apportioning~~ pre-apportioning as ideals the quantified available resource capacity for the activity to the different technology areas of interest in the computer tracking system based on a value assigned to each technology area of interest;
- (iv) ~~obtaining~~ periodically inputting actual resource usage by technology area ~~from~~ into the computer tracking system; and
- (v) employing the computer tracking system in ~~providing~~ periodically generating a report indicative of the difference between the inputted actual resource usage and the pre-apportioned resource allocation capacity ideals by technology areas of interest for use in managing resource allocation adjustments for the intellectual property activity.

45. (Currently Amended) The at least one program storage device of claim 44, wherein said employing (v) comprises proactively managing future resource allocation for the intellectual property activity by determining the difference between the inputted actual resource usage and the pre-apportioned resource capacity allocation by technology area of interest.

46. (Currently Amended) The at least one program storage device of claim 45, further comprising for a given time period, periodically repeating the ~~obtaining~~ inputting (iv) and the employing (v) to achieve within the given time period set goals for the intellectual property activity based on assigned technology tags.

47. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 46, wherein the assigning technology tags comprises assigning technology based descriptors to different technology fields of the intellectual property activity.

48. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 47, wherein the employing (v) comprises dynamically adjusting, within the given time period, resource allocation to at least one technology field of the intellectual property activity.

49. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 44, wherein the employing (v) comprises periodically assembling the report including the actual resource usage by technology areas of interest and set goals for the intellectual property activity based on assigned technology tags.

50. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 49, wherein the periodically assembled report further includes the actual resource usage by technology area of interest for a first time period and the actual resource usage by technology area of interest for a second time period, wherein the second time period is longer than the first time period.

51. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 50, wherein the employing (v) comprises comparing the actual resource usage by technology area of interest for the first time period and the actual resource usage by technology area of interest for the second time period, and based thereon, proactively adjusting resource allocation by technology areas of interest for the intellectual property activity to achieve the set goals.

52. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 44, wherein the intellectual property activity comprises at least one of (1) modulating invention disclosure creation activity, (2) evaluating invention disclosures, (3) searching inventions based on evaluated invention disclosures, (4) filing patent applications based on evaluated invention disclosures, (5) issuing patents, and (6) maintaining issued patents.

53. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 44, further comprising setting intellectual property activity goals, the setting including at least some of: (1) understanding current and future opportunity space for a business; (2) understanding the current intellectual property portfolio; (3) identifying technology fields requiring intellectual property development; (4) setting intellectual property development objectives; and (5) identifying and communicating specific technology opportunities; and wherein the employing (v) comprises proactively managing the resource allocation by technology areas of interest to achieve the intellectual property activity goals.

54. (Previously Presented) The at least one program storage device of claim 44, wherein the intellectual property activity comprises invention development, and wherein the employing (v) comprises proactively managing resource allocation to achieve invention development goals using the actual resource usage and the prior resource allocation by technology areas of interest.

55. (Canceled).

*How is that guaranteed*

56. (Currently Amended) At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of managing invention disclosures, said method comprising:

~~determining~~ quantifying a desired number of invention disclosures based on available resources;

~~apportioning~~ pre-apportioning in a computer tracking system the desired number of invention disclosures by a plurality of technology areas of interest based on a ~~priority~~ value assigned to each technology areas of interest;

~~tracking via a computer tracking system~~ inputting an actual number of generated invention disclosures by technology area of interest into the computer tracking system, and employing the computer tracking system in ~~providing~~ periodically generating a report indicative of the difference between the inputted actual number of invention disclosures and the pre-apportioned desired number of invention disclosures by technology area of interest; and

using the periodically generated report to proactively manage at least one of invention disclosure creation and invention disclosure evaluation for patent searching or patent application filing.

\* \* \* \* \*